



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Statement of U.S. Transportation Secretary Slater
Upon Introduction of the Pipeline Safety Act of 2000**

I wish to commend Representatives James Oberstar (Minn.) and John Dingell, (Mich.) Ranking Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure and Commerce Committees, respectively, for their introduction of the Pipeline Safety Act of 2000. This legislation provides for strong enforcement, mandatory testing of all pipelines, community access to pipeline information, and additional resources for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline Safety Program to ensure the safe operation of our nation's interstate pipeline system.

In addition to Representatives Oberstar and Dingell, I commend Representatives Frank Pallone (N.J.) and Jay Inslee (Wash.) for their hard work and steadfast perseverance in guiding the House to this point. Further, I thank the bill's additional cosponsors Tom Udall (N.M.), Bill Pascrell (N.J.), John Lewis (Ga.), Adam Smith (Wash.), and John Tierney (Mass.), as well as the many other individuals who have worked with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Clinton-Gore Administration in seeking the highest level of safety for our nation's pipelines. The tragedies that occurred in Bellingham, Wash., Carlsbad, N.M., and other locations throughout the nation should never happen again.

I urge the House leadership and its Members to act quickly to pass comprehensive pipeline safety legislation and move to a conference with the Senate, which passed the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act on Sept. 7. I look forward to working with the Congress to resolve any remaining legislative differences so that our nation may benefit from an interstate pipeline system that is as safe as humanly possible.

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